

/158 cont./

/footnote 29 cont./ natives instead use the Portuguese verb with the Tukano ending: perdoáya (you forgive), perdoápõ (I forgave).

He thinks about revenge, and there are numerous episodes /159/ demonstrating that he waits patiently for years for the opportunity, and they take long trips for the purpose of executing revenge.

It is an imprescriptible obligation, that of vengeance, a'mẽ-wehẽ, incumbent on the group, for one of its members killed or wounded by some civilized man or Indian of another tribe. Vengeance will also be taken within the tribe against a native of another subdivision, and even against one's own blood brother. If he does not execute the vengeance in some case, it is because he is afraid of counter-vengeance (malefice).

In appearance the Indian is very peaceful. One does not hear the natives quarreling among themselves in loud voices, even when it seems to us that there are reasons for it. They even seem very polite among themselves. When, in a group of natives, one among them gave, let us suppose, incorrect information (it should be noted that they do not like to state: I do not know, I am not sure of that), the others do not at the time correct the inaccuracy or mistake. Perhaps one of those present, when he is alone with the civilized, will on request rectify the erroneous information.

There is no recollection, except for the legends, of war among the various tribes (30).

30. In October of 1947, a few days before our visit to the maloca of the Makú, about six kilometers from Iauareté, on the occasion of a caxirí (celebration with drinking), a machete fight took place among them, during which one Indian died and several were seriously hurt. In January of 1948 in this same maloca there was dissension of

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152 leveled out nations distinct and quite different in somatic traits, in bio-ethnic origin, and in speech, and it seems to have managed to mold all the components of the tribes according to a single model. For this reason we affirm that, even in the way of laughing and gesticulating, the different tribes of the Uaupés are similar, and for this same reason, the vast Uaupésina region must be considered as a single cultural area.

Here are some indications of the native formality of the Uaupés.

At the meetings of relatives, indeed, as we have already pointed out, even at the meetings of spouses or between parents and children after a long separation, there are no displays of jubilation.

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Trips for visits are frequent among them; psychological necessity because they live in small groups? Or reminiscence of an ancestral nomadism?

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The official receptions at the great feasts or possible ones at some meeting are always invested with a strange and indispensable formality.

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* [192]

When during his frequent pleasure trips he decides to stop at some maloca or povoado, he leaves his canoe at the landing place and goes up. If /166/ there are several, they will do it in Indian file, that is, one after the other, observing an order in which the most dignified goes in front. He will absolutely not enter, without saying at the door: "nē! maxsā nŋi? Hello, are there people there?" He will say this even when he sees that there are people. Then the head of the house, or the most important person there, will come to receive him, and they touch each other lightly with their right hands. Standing up, facing each other, without looking at each other, staring at the ground or at a corner, the one from the house will ask: -- "You have arrived? extatŋ mŋŋ?" -- "I have arrived, extápō." Or: -- "Has your canoe arrived?" The other will answer: -- "It arrived." They will spend a few seconds in silence, then he will continue: -- "Ah! You have arrived?" -- "Yes, I have arrived." After a short pause he will perhaps insist: "Ah! Well! You have

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arrived?" -- "Yes, I have arrived." -- "Where did you come from?" (a question many times useless, because he knows very well the visitor's place of origin). -- "From X" (and he says the name of the locality). -- "Ah! Do you come from X?" -- "Yes, I come from X." These and similar expressions are interspersed with silence and with "II," each of them alternating, as a sign that the one understood the other's sentence.

The same will be done and said by each man from the maloca to the guest, or guests, if there were several. Moreover the women will pass one by one in front of each visitor and, touching his right hand, will ask the same questions: -- "Have you arrived?" -- "I have arrived," etc., without however, looking at the guests, with the eyes lowered. The women soon withdraw, and one of them goes to get a small mat, stretches it out in front of the visitors, and on the mat she puts a pan with quinhapira and a sieve with beijú, from which the visitors help themselves without shyness.

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Later, sitting on the stools or each one in his hammock, they carry on long conversations until the late hours of the night, with a certain rapidity, interrupted by the very monotonous "II" and with countless and noisy laughs. If we consider that the Tukano language is so concise, it says so many things with few words, we will have an idea of the loquacity of the natives among themselves. The child will tell everything that happened during the months that he was in school. The adult will tell about his trips, episodes of fishing or hunting, the events, the persons that he met, the conversations that he had, his own and other persons' episodes, and, finally, he will have innumerable pieces of news to report, which seem uninteresting to us, but for his childish mentality they are very important. To the curiosity to know corresponds, on the other side, a great desire to tell.

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The visitors deposit the offering on banana leaves or mats or baskets, displayed in the center of the maloca. Perhaps there is still more of the offering at the landing place; they go to fetch it and make their delivery.

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The women and children who have arrived gather at the back, where those of the maloca are already.

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Once the offering is finished, and the shouts and music have stopped, those from outside, starting with their tuxáua, greet individually those of the maloca, /343/ starting with the first one in line, who will, naturally, be the local tuxáua. They are the common and formalistic greetings: -- "Did you come?" -- "I came!" -- "Did you come to the feast?" -- "I came." -- "Did you bring the offering (fish or the name of the fruit)?" -- "I brought." He goes on to greet in the same way the second man in the line and thus all the rest. All the visitors, in the order of their reception, imitate the first one. All, however, with much gravity. As they finish greeting those of the maloca, the guests are arranging themselves in a long line, according to their importance, on the right side, in front of those of the maloca, from the main door to the back.

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Two or more men of the maloca distribute a cuia /shell from the Crescentia cujete/ of caxiri to each guest. After all have drunk, they sit down, and the women of the maloca come to greet the men at some distance and without giving them their hands. If the women are from the tribe of the guests, these greetings are in the dialect of their own tribe and not in that of the husband.

The chief of the maloca speaks in a loud voice to his own wife (one of the indications of the matriarchalism): "They came to bring the offering (fish, fruit), you give thanks." She, with two women, goes to the center of the maloca and says -- "You brought with so much trouble fish (pupunha) for us. We have prepared a little caxiri in a hurry." Then the visiting chief answers them: -- "You may eat at will. The fishing (or the harvest) was small, but we have brought it with good will."

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276 to the least important of the men who have participated in the
538 dances, and who arrange themselves in two lines, one in front
of the other, all, however, sitting down. Each man takes some
puffs and passes the cigar to his neighbor, and thus everybody
smokes several times, until the cigars are consumed. The tuxaua
and the bayá alternate with the Komūā the episodes of the history
of the origins, dōxporó-kase kextí, recalling the different places
from where their ancestors came, and the exploits that marked
this ascent. They do it, however, in a singing rhythm, prolong-
ing the final syllables of each part that they narrate.

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796 Once this rite is concluded, the sticks and snappers are
574 gathered up, the men take off their ornaments, which are care-
fully kept in the box for this purpose (VI - 2, d (7)). The guest
tuxaua gives thanks in a loud voice: -- "The poosé was very good.
We enjoyed ourselves very much, etc."

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796 As the conclusion of this rite and of the fast that they must
observe at these feasts, the Kōmūā who prepared the kaxpí puts
in the mouth of each man a roasted pepper. For the young ones
there is prepared a broth with lemon juice and pepper (and some-
times also salt), and this is applied to their noses with a funnel
of leaves. The young man must draw this broth into the mouth
and swallow it. After this ceremony, they can take their mingau
or any food whatsoever.

[513] The entertainment might continue, principally among the
younger persons. Ordinarily, however, they adjourn to the ham-
mock (often two persons in the same hammock) and rest, in order
to start the amusements again in the cool of the afternoon, around
4 o'clock.

5) /sic: 6)/ Games.

[524] We have spoken of the number of games that take place
between the dances, but occur principally in the prolongation of
the feast, that is, from the second day on.

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*[192] In order to make maruplara, mō'sigō, for their own child, soon after the giving of the name, they start giving it to drink, at each new moon, the infusion of the leaves of some plants, such as the bará, perí-pirioca, and of a variety of Araceae (with smaller leaves than those of the taloba). The same result is obtained by rubbing the hands with such leaves on the same occasion of the new moon.

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[515] There is a plant called kā'rā pūrī (Uaupés kā'ná pūrī), the leaves of which have a long peduncle and are used to dry the hands, as we do with a towel. When the wife is in the period of gestation, neither she nor her husband may eat the small black fruit of this plant, because the child will be born with a long neck. Both will likewise be careful during the pregnancy to cut off the apex of these leaves that they might use. If they do not do this, the child will be born with long hair over the face along the ears.

• 576 The young men and women, when they meet outside the maloca, turn their backs and say insults to each other (79).

[797] 79. Even the boys and girls of the Mission schools exchange insults when they meet in groups on walks. For example, they were heard to say: -- You are lazy girls! And they retaliate: -- You dirty your clothes (the girls also help to wash the clothes of the boarding-school boys of the Mission).

They spit to the side when they pass near someone with whom they are not sympathetic.

582 /368/ If those of the same tribe marry one another they will not have children (80)!

[797] 80. Pe. Afonso Kuipers from Teresita (Colombia, Papurí River) promoted two marriages of Pirá-tapúya couples, and they were fecund, giving birth to healthy children. In spite of this, they did not lose their own belief.

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in or around the maloca, loafing, jesting, or in jovial groups working at small manufactures such as basketry. It is the wives and their daughters who are dispersed, each in her separate garden, and who then return in the heat of the day, tired and subdued, to a house that is gay with the laughter and chatter of the men.

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In the recent past, no more than a generation or two ago, the inner zone of the community was separated, indeed virtually isolated, from the manioc gardens by a ten-foot-deep defensive moat set with sharpened stakes. Tree trunks crossed its steep walls to serve as narrow foot walks for the sure-footed women. At night, or in anticipation of an enemy, the footbridges were withdrawn. The house and the plaza then were an inner citadel. The moat protected against surprise attack. When enemies were sighted or their presence announced by the

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angry growling of the dogs they were met as far from the residence as possible, and the moat served as a defensive line to cover retreat. The strategy then was to lure the attackers to fall into the moat while the defenders slipped across their secretly placed bridges. If the people felt themselves to be overwhelmed they scattered to safety through the dense forest, abandoning house and possessions. (Houses still have an escape port at a side wall facing the forest.) But if they were confident they left the women and children behind in the house with a small guard. I had the privilege of this guard duty on one occasion. I was instructed to cover the escape of the women and children if need be. Fortunately, there was no need.

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The canoe landing is little more than a level stretch of beach where a canoe can be pulled up out of the water. It is also the site for bathing, for drawing water, for washing manioc roots. It is a port. One rarely comes upon a community by land. Visitors pause at the landing to wash, adjust their apparel, and freshen up face and body paint before beginning the climb up the path leading to the plaza.

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Like the plaza, the orderliness of the canoe landing denotes the state of morale of a community. Some householders have carved steps into the clay bank, lined them with split logs, and provided a rail. Guests are never received at the landing. Courtesy requires that guests be allowed the privacy of arrival, and the hosts discreetly retire to the plaza to await them. There are ceremonies in which the arrival of spirit beings is an important feature. On such occasions the men who are to enact these beings use the canoe landing for donning masks and for other preparations. On these occasions, too, the canoe landing is a sanctuary from which all unauthorized persons discreetly retire.

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Before dawn the canoe landing is the favored place for marital

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THE CUBE O

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the Cuduiari I met Indians who spoke of the advantages for personal autonomy of smaller residences. The Satellite community of the *Bahukiuwa* subsib was in the process of establishing itself fully in small, square-shaped, individual household residences.

SANITATION

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A well-run community, as we have already observed, is clean and orderly. The maloca is swept regularly and is neatly maintained. Except for an accumulation of kitchen debris at the rear of the house, the grounds, including the plaza, the canoe landing, and the path from the canoe landing to the house, are kept orderly and clean. The headman, responsible for the appearance of the community, commands the women to clean up house and grounds in anticipation of visitors. Normally, the women of his household, wife and daughters, sweep the central corridor as well as the kitchen zone at the rear and the front reception area. A headman's wife does not command assistance in general cleaning chores. She requests it and it is most unlikely that a woman asked to help would refuse. When the women take to cleaning they do so with gaiety and vigor, as is appropriate for a collective undertaking.

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The Cubeo regard disorder as a sign of low morale, so that a house that has become untidy will surely be restored to order in expectation of company. A large maloca is almost invariably clean if only because it is a firm and effective headman who will have founded a large maloca in the first place. When a guest arrives unexpectedly, the woman who first presents him with the formal offering of boiled capicum peppers apologizes for the condition of the house. Since there is always some advance notice of a guest's arrival, the women have some time for tidying. Cubeo etiquette is rather demanding that guest and host make the effort to appear at their best when they meet.

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Sanitary standards of a Cubeo community are very high. The Indians protect the river from pollution. They dump in it only waste meat such as entrails — but these are immediately devoured by the piranha fish. No one defecates near the river. People go off into the brush, that lies at no great distance from the house. When a child has been toilet trained it, too, will go off to the brush for its excretory functions.

A dump is maintained near the river bank. During the rainy season the household waste products are washed into the river. But at that time the volume of water is high. During the dry season the dump is

at a distance from the water and is kept sanitary by action of the sun. The dump receives the body wastes of the very young children.

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THE MALOCA

The maloca (*kenámi*) is no mere shelter or sleeping barracks. It is a vital social center, the very focus of social and religious life. Under its great gabled roof all ceremony takes place, the dead are buried, food is prepared, and almost all implements and articles of use are manufactured. The Cubeo are largely an indoor people. Children play outside and there are occasions when the older men sit on the plaza in the shade of the house. But in the main, adults spend their leisure time indoors, lounging in hammocks. Guests are received at the doorway of the house, the hosts standing always within, in the formal exchange of greetings. Having been welcomed at the door, guests are ushered to low benches set at an angle near the doorway and facing inward.

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When I came among the *Bahúkiwa* they were on the upswing, having come from a creek site to the main stream. In the new site they had put up several smaller houses and the framework of a large 12-compartment maloca was in place. This large house, of standard size, was 75 feet long, 55 feet wide, and 21 feet high. The eaves of the hip roof extended six feet past the low side walls. The new house is always the work of the headman. It is started on his initiative and the work is carried on with his active encouragement and under his direction. The leadership qualities of a headman are precisely reflected in the maloca, in its size and in the care that is taken in its construction. The headman is known as *kenámi upákū* (owner of the house). The house is his, in the sense that one who is not willing to accept the authority of the headman will not live in the house. A house, the Cubeo believe, cannot tolerate dissension. Whatever the genealogical relationships of its residents, they are the equivalent of a joint family. The Cubeo are decidedly uncomfortable if the atmosphere of a house is lacking in familial warmth. If necessary, they will overlook discourtesy, uncooperativeness, and sullenness in the expectation that such behavior will be only a passing phase. Nevertheless, they are acutely sensitive to one another's moods and before too long one sullen individual will have infected them all. Then someone will move out and all sense the impending dissolution of their community. The smaller house that will now be built alongside does not remove the source of disaffection. It stands rather as a reminder that they have not been able to get along with one another. The headman is

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business. The Indians are now aware that in their dealings with the whites their labor and their products have a fixed value with some leeway for bargaining. Direct commercial trade, object for object, is almost exclusively the province of the Indian women. This is not a new role for them because they also are active in intertribal and intersib trade. Because women do not have as much contact with whites as do their men they still inject into the commercial trading much that is traditional.

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The traditional attitude is that any exchange is part of a patterned social relationship. An exchange establishes a linkage between the principals and each is aware of his obligations and of the showing he must make. The obligation is of generosity, the temptation to give somewhat more than one has received. The impression to be made is that one does not haggle over objects. An exchange between a man and a woman who are sexually eligible to one another introduces the additional element of flirtatiousness. All of these elements enter into and complicate and enliven the farinha trade. The more experienced men are able to adapt to commercial methods, but since it is improper for a man to conduct his wife's business for her he will stand aside when she is trading her farinha.

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I never witnessed the intertribal trade, but when I pointed to an object and asked who had made it or where it had come from, its provenience and the nature of the transaction were always known. Manioc grating boards, for example, generally come from the Isana River. The Cubeo often traded European articles for tribal manufactures, less because they needed the tribal object than to satisfy another Indian's need for the European article. A Macú once wanted matches and gave a small basket for a box. The Macú baskets are highly valued, but in this case the initiative was with the Macú. An important principle of native trade in the area is that an object asked for must be surrendered. One must be careful, therefore, not to ask for something the owner might be reluctant to part with. Thus the *Buhikiwa* headman asked me as a condition of my staying in his community not to offer to buy ceremonial objects. "If you ask for them," he explained, "we shall have to give them to you. How shall we replace them?" Thus, there is an element of delicacy in intertribal trade. At the same time there is a compulsion to engage in trade so as to give significance to the meeting of people of different tribes. In sum, while intertribal trade eventually satisfies the requirements of the Indians for specialized objects they would not ordinarily have, each individual transaction responds to motives that are often only indirectly economic. Trade objects circulate readily. Thus, a set of

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tion seemed natural enough to the *Bahúkiwa*. It is not an exclusive sib cult. 769

The ancestor instruments lay nearby in a secret place on the river bank, upstream from the *maloca*, dressed in ceremonial dance feathers (*mápena*) because, as the Indians said, "our ancestors love to dance." (When the trumpets are removed the *mápena* is laid aside). The party first fetched the instruments so that the ancestors might accompany them on berry picking. Intermittently during the morning those of us at the *maloca* could hear the horns, at times sounding near and then trailing into the distance. The party returned in the late afternoon. The women at their chores near the river bank paused to listen to the low, mournful notes of the oncoming horns. A shot from the canoe was a warning signal that sent the women running for the house, laughing and shrieking at one another to hurry. 796 [534]

The canoe came into sight, low in the water with its heavy burden of berries neatly packaged in baskets of loosely plaited palm fronds. The youngsters were paddling and their escorts played the horns, swinging them from side to side to sound in all directions. Now the women, who had gathered at the rear door of the *maloca*, ran off together to the manioc gardens, their traditional sanctuary, those in the lead calling to the laggards to hurry. [533]

The river was low and the canoe could not be seen except from the very edge of the high bank. No one, except the ethnographer, came to look. The party unloaded the berries. They bathed, and having bound fresh sprays of fragrant leaves over their buttocks, ascended the steep path. At the top of the bank the men formed themselves two abreast and marched upon the house sounding the horns, the youngsters trailing after them. Only three pairs of the traditional five were used, *Bwü*, *Onpwénda kádjúwe*, and *Onpwénda*. [291] [824] [534]

The men sounding the horns, as embodiments of the ancestors, assumed a stern and almost menacing manner. This unaccustomed countenance seemed to frighten the boys and they were visibly nervous. The men were not at this moment concerned with the boys, but with bringing the ancestors and their powers into the house. They marched upon the house in the familiar dance step of a long measure and a pause, two long measures and a pause, and then three quick steps. At the pause, the six players swayed and swung their instruments in a high wide arc before them, the two *Bwü* horns in the lead, followed by *Onpwénda kádjúwe* and *Onpwénda*. [535]

The ancestors did not enter the house immediately but paused at the front plaza. No man came out of the house, not because it was taboo but as a courtesy. [576]

THE DRINKING PARTY

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when the guests arrive the hosts have been honed and keyed up for the day almost like fighters who have been in training. The guests who come to a drinking party see their host sib in its prime condition. The allusion to a fighter training for a match is not out of place here because the gathering of the sibs is dramatized by the CUBEC not as old friends coming together but rather as jealous, aggressive, and fiercely independent segments who have resolved to be friends.

On the morning of the drinking party the *behörü* dancing staff is planted into the ground before the house as a pennant indicating that a party is to take place. It symbolizes dancing and gaiety. The young men, helped by the boys, decorate the staff with its colored feathers. When they have dressed the *behörü* they go to the river to bathe, returning clean and fragrant with sprays of leafy twigs thrust through the belt at the rear. Bathing in this context is bodily cleanliness but also ritual contact with the river.

The drinking party itself proceeds according to fixed stages. The first is the reception of guests. This follows a distinctive protocol. Guests arrive by sib and are received by sib. Having reached the landing beach and drawn up their canoes, a group pauses to make itself more presentable, washing face and hands, adjusting garments, tidying the children, and freshening body paint and ornamentation. The guests then walk slowly and with dignity up the path to the house, the older men in the lead and the women and children making up the rear. The women carry the burden of hammocks, food, and utensils, the men carry the ceremonial regalia, boxes of feather head-dresses, dancing staffs, Panpipes. They are not greeted until they reach the house. There, inside the great front doorway of the house, stand the men of the maloca, one behind the other in order of seniority, the headman at their head. Long, low benches have been set inside the doorway for the seating of the male guests. Guests are received by sib in order of seniority, but the order of reception of sibs is fixed only by the time of arrival. Men greet men and women greet women. Persons of adult status only are greeted. The greetings are stereotyped and formal, delivered in the characteristic chant and with averted eyes that marks the speech between persons sharing a respect relationship. The guests' reply must echo the phrases of the host. "You have come" is echoed, "I have come." At very solemn occasions when the ritual separation of men and women is to be emphasized with particular rigor, the women are received at the rear (women's) entrance by the host wives. On ordinary occasions the women may come through the front door after all the men are in. They, too, are received in a ceremonious greeting, but an abbreviated

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one. Each guest passes down the full line of the hosts, repeating with each one the standard greetings. Cosponsors of the *unkindye* are always in the receiving line, with their wives in the parallel line, whereas household heads who have not cosponsored have the option of greeting the guests formally or informally. It would seem that if there were a large attendance the reception would take up a good part of the evening. In practice there is a tendency to curtail the formalities once the drinking has begun, unless the circumstances are particularly sacred. The first guests are received when the sun has set two-thirds of the way to the horizon, or at four o'clock in the afternoon. As soon as the first man has passed through the receiving line he is escorted to a bench by a young man of the house and handed a calabash of chicha. By nightfall the guests who have been drinking for a while have become more restless and more boisterous, and the greetings on the receiving line have become more curt and less formal. Younger guests slip by without being greeted and younger hosts slip out of line to take part in the drinking. In this way it often happens that the late arrivals are greeted with little more than a casual handshake by a slightly tipsy and gay host.

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This seemingly spontaneous deterioration of a pattern of greeting follows, in fact, a characteristic Cubeo ceremonial procedure, which is that every sacred event begins in a slow, solemn, and stately manner and proceeds stage by stage through a steady mounting of tempo until an orgasmic peak is reached, which is then followed by subsidence. I use a sexual figure of speech here because in the prolonged and elaborate mourning ritual which represents Cubeo ritual activity at its most complete, the entire proceedings unquestionably follow the sexual rhythm from courtship to coitus.

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The women who have come as guests sit in a bunch at the left side of the maloca near the front door. The men sit on two long benches in a V formation opposite the women and also near the door. At the rear of the house sits the first group of dancers, men of the house. After a while the guests begin to move deeper into the house, where each woman visitor stakes out a space along a side wall for her effects and her children. Men form separate clusters. The older men, whose behavior is consistently more restrained, are the last to leave the forward benches. When the women have gone back into the house these elders occupy all the benches and, facing each other in two rows, smoke cigars in a ceremonial manner, waving the smoking cheroot before their faces and nodding pleasantly to one another. The cigars are held in a carved forked holder with a pointed stem that can be stuck into the ground before each smoker,

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There is a strong sensation that an animal is biting one's buttocks, a feeling of the feet being tied. The earth spins and the ground rises to the head. There are moments of euphoria as well, when one hears music, the sound of people singing, and the sound of flowing water. The Cubeo do not take *mihi* for the pleasure of its hallucinations but for the intensity of the total experience, for the wide range of sensation. I spoke to no one who pretended to enjoy it.

A sacred drug, *mihi* is handled in a ritualistic manner and is served from a distinctive pottery jug that is never washed. When the hosts—always a pair, one man holding the jug and the other the serving dish—offer *mihi* the following stylized exchange takes place. The guests exclaim, "*ho ho ho ho ho o o o*, here it comes." The host asks, "How are you?" and the guest replies, "I am well. I have come well." The host stirs the *mihi*, saying to it, "Stir! Look, it is bitter. It tastes bitter. Our Ancients also drank it." The guest replies, "Let me take it. Let me see if I can drink it in the same way as our Ancients did. I am going to drink." He drinks it down and is offered a mandatory second drink. The host says, "Look. Here it is, drink again." The guest now replies, "I am going to drink so as to see [a vision]." A guest whose father is dead will say upon receiving the *mihi*, "My father, when he was alive, drank like this, so he told me. He sought me out that I might drink. My father never got drunk when he drank it."

When each guest has had his two portions of *mihi* the hosts drink off two portions and then serve one portion to each guest again. The guests murmur *ba ha a a a*, meaning "well done." When the last portion is given, the host announces, "We have finished drinking," and each guest replies, "I am pleased." At this the host announces he is sitting down to have a vision, and he retires. Suddenly he leaps up at the guests in the characteristic *mihi* dance and with the sucking sound. He intends to frighten them and shouts *wetcôwe* (vomit!), and the guests reply, "Bring it on. We wish to vomit."

Drinking, smoking, chewing coca powder, and taking the infusion of *mihi* are all acts with strong symbolism of sharing a group experience. Out of bravado a man may down an entire calabash of chicha. More often he will pass it to a neighbor, who will also take a few swallows and pass the calabash along. The drinker will also have taken chicha from the quantity prepared by each cosponsor. The cigarette is passed from mouth to mouth. The host provides tobacco, which he passes among his guests from a bark-cloth pouch, and a bark wrapper, which is tied to the house posts. Guests may smoke their own tobacco but will always use the wrapper that is

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THE MOURNING CEREMONY

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men's section making a sucking sound with his lips. Having circled once, he proceeds to prepare the *mihi*. He prepares a quart, which is considered a great deal.

The younger men now fetch the *abúhuwa* masks, that have already been prepared except for final decorations and embellishments. A completed mask has the full sacred character and for that reason the last touches are put off until the very end. The same principle applies to *mihi*, coca, and chicha; they must be fresh or their potency will be lost. In the case of the masks, however, it is a matter of the spirits not being kept waiting. When people come to a ceremony they also complete their decorations just before entering the house, pausing at the canoe landing to do this. Hosts for their part arrange to complete their preparations almost at the moment the first guest arrives.

The first guests to arrive are the Satellites — members of the sib — who appear precisely at noon. They go first, informally, to the rear of the house, where they deliver a bundle of dried fish, a traditional Satellite food offering, to the headman of the sib. They then return to the canoe landing to prepare for a new and formal approach to the house. They carry heavy staffs or other weapons. The head of each Satellite household approaches the open doorway, strikes the side wall a resounding blow with his staff, and steps a few paces into the house, his sons behind him. Inside, the male hosts are in line in order of age seniority, the headman and chief mourner at the head. Each man holds either a staff or a loaded gun planted firmly at his side. Guests and hosts exchange formal greetings in a rapidly delivered dirge that is punctuated at intervals with a moaning sound *ee ee ee ee* followed by a whistling sound *iiii*, as when *mihi* is brought in. The men, as is customary in formal greetings, do not look at one another but at some distant point past the other's shoulder. The guest moves down the line, spending about five minutes with each host, and the next is received in the same way. When the first arrival has passed down the line, he is given a calabash of chicha by a host, who leaves his place in line to do this. Women are greeted at the rear door by female hosts.

While the hosts safeguard themselves against sorcery by chewing the jaguars' bark cloth, the guests wear a little pouch at the throat for the same purpose. The effort to protect against sorcery is realistic, since the Cubeos regard every drinking party, an *óyne* in particular, as a prime occasion for a sorcerer to practice his art. These safeguards also carry out the theme of anger and implied hostility that characterizes the early stages of the *óyne*.

After the formal greetings, the guests return to their canoes to

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574 violent counterclockwise motion for which the symbol is the loud
[535] whistle.

On the women's side a parallel form of greeting, but with a minimum of ritual, is going on at the same time. The greetings among the women are, in many respects, a counterpoint to the greetings among the men. I have already mentioned how the women are made to tumble into the house so that their entrance is as ludicrous as the entrance of the men is somber. However, having picked herself up and having straightened out her belongings, each woman is greeted in a file by the host women. Like the men, the women are grouped by maloca and in order of their husbands' age seniority. Having been greeted with the conventional handshake, the group of hostesses and the group of guests face each other and shout angrily at one another; these shouts are not accusations or recriminations, but expressions of anger at the enemy who has killed the deceased. Two women who have been facing one another in postures of anger suddenly fall to a squatting position, each with an arm around the other's shoulder, drop their heads, and weep. Women who are nursing babies seem

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Fig. 12. Angry declamation at mourning ceremony.

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The first phase of the *oyne* concludes on the morning of the fourth day. Despite the drinking and the exhaustion of frenzied dancing the departures are as formal as the arrivals. The hosts form their line at the doorway and the guests pass along, exchanging final expressions of grief. Men embrace one another and weep. Women weep once more with women. Before he leaves the house, each man presents the host with the masks he has brought, including all its ornaments. Among the *Hehénewa* the men mimicked the lamentations of the guests after the last one had left, and all laughed.

One month later a concluding and simpler ceremony is held. On the first evening the masks dance again and the *Xudjiho* is sounded. At dawn the masks and their ornaments, as well as all the ceremonial paraphernalia made specifically for the *oyne* including the trumpets, are burned in a great fire on the front plaza. Not all the masks are destroyed, because the children are privileged to reclaim any they wish from the flames. The burning puts an end to the jurisdiction over the house of the spirit representations and officially concludes the mourning.

That evening the final dance is held. The house has now been restored to a normal ceremonial state, and the dances of this evening include men and women. They dance the ordinary dances of the drinking parties and conclude with a great circle dance within the house that includes all men, women, and youngsters. This dance is known as *kompaindūwū* (going home). The dance forms on the plaza and circles about a fire in the center of the house, moving clockwise and then reversing. The men are fully ornamented and carry stamping tubes; a woman dances between two men. They sing a refrain, *kenadjū marié kenadjū pimári*. Periodically a woman dancer screams loudly in a high-pitched voice, breaking in upon the somber melody. As this dance continues through the night, couples break away and leave for the brush behind the house. They copulate, return to the dance, and seek new sexual partners. At this point the dance has become chaotic. No overt sexuality, however, occurs within the house. These events conclude the social aspects of the *oyne*, and the following morning, after the guests have begun to depart, is devoted to dealing with the spirits of the dead. There are two events, the first of which I was regrettably barred from observing. This may have been the endorannibalism that Wallace reported in 1833¹⁰ and that

¹⁰ The Tairiānas and Tucanos and some other tribes, about a month after the funeral, disenter the corpse, which is then much decomposed, and put it in a great pan, or oven, over the fire, till all the volatile parts are driven off with a most horrible odor, leaving only a black carbonaceous mass, which is pounded into a

El Diablo

under his battered trilby and the groundsheets, while Brian dived beneath the tarpaulin and spent the night stretched over tins and kitbags. 122

The New Year came in with more rain. For all the discomfort it brought we could only look upon such deluges as a sign of good fortune; they were early this year, the rivers would now be higher and our descent easier. So we started on our journey downstream. *El Diablo*, lumbering along like a loaded ark, was stopped by every snag and log. She took days to cover the same distance as the slim canoes of the Indians, when they later travelled back up the river in a matter of hours to pick up the fuel drums we had had to leave behind on the portage.

One day canoes appeared gliding towards us, both loaded down with large wicker baskets of *farinha* and paddled by two men in loincloths. Strings of minute white beads were around their necks and black berry bracelets around each arm. An old man, his wizened face eyeing us suspiciously, was sitting in the bows of the first canoe. (291) [301]

This was our first real contact with the Indians of the Piraparaná. Their immediate reaction was not one of fear, but rather, like our own, of enquiry and interest. They said nothing until José hailed them in their own dialect. There ensued a long, almost formal exchange of greetings which we were to hear many times when travelling through their territory. Before they left we asked them to carry a message for Nestor - in case they should meet him, for they were travelling to the Río Ti. (607) [576] •

Much depended on our guide José. That he had been with Padre Elorza was not necessarily to our advantage, for in the first place we could not be sure what effect the first contact with Catholicism had had on the Indians of the Piraparaná, nor did we know what instructions José had been given by the padres. We had to depend on him entirely both for our own safety when travelling downstream and for the information we were to get. He was not a very pleasant or easy character. From the outset he had always wanted to have his own way and if this was not granted then he became moody and unco-operative. We could never be certain what he would do next and after his attempt at desertion we could not trust him. However he worked very hard and showed remarkable common sense, and without him we would never have got through the rapids ahead of us. 114

His experience with white men had not only come from the Mission. Some five years previously a *cauchero* had come to his river home close to the Brazilian frontier. He had taken six boys away with him to work the wild rubber trees and one of them was José. Later he had escaped from the *cauchero*, but during those four years he had learnt how to operate an out-board motor, to handle money and had even been in an aeroplane. He had come under the Mission's wing only recently, and it may have been this combination of experiences that had complicated his character. He no longer possessed the Indian's direct simplicity.

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141 The Tukano are small: a man rarely exceeds five foot six and the women are
 164 often no more than four foot ten inches. To see a cripple or deformed person
 291 is unusual. They are healthy and immensely strong. A man wears no more
 301 than his loincloth, today cut from a piece of trade cotton but formerly a
 strip of beaten barkcloth. Around his neck are three or four coils of minute
 white porcelain beads, which are among the most valued objects of ex-
 change; a tight string of black berries is strung on *cumare* palm fibre above
 each elbow. The ears are often pierced with a short cane jutting out from the
 lobe; sometimes a feather is put into the cane, or a flower replaces the ear-
 plug. With their short, cropped hair and well-proportioned bodies they
 stand out as strong figures, beautifully adapted to the forests in which they
 live.

481 Their gait is jerky rather than slow and relaxed, indeed they almost run;
 whether the Indian is out hunting or carrying heavy loads he always moves
 147 in the same way. We could only look on amazed as our fifteen-gallon fuel
 drums were carried for two- or three-hour stretches with no apparent diffi-
 culty. They only showed any signs of wilting in strong sunlight; an Indian
 would rather travel by night than on an open river in the midday sun; his
 home is in the cool forest or under the dark eaves of the *maloca*. His face
 302 painted red with *karayuru*, a bow and a quiver of curare-tipped arrows in his
 411 hand, he has little sympathy for strangers and would rather remain undis-
 609 turbed. It is therefore not surprising that the Indian's face tells you little.
 When he stares at you with his black eyes, it is as though you were peering into
 152 the cold unknown, and there is little warmth in his expression. We very sel-
 dom noticed any demonstration of affection among the older people. Husband
 593 and wife live together rather as a matter of arrangement than through love,
 85 and tenderness was only shown to the younger children. The old people,
 888 once unfit to go out hunting or to work in the plantation, may be neglected
 in times of shortage and even left to die. They are no longer of any use to the
 society, so it is best they go; for theirs is a harsh world where only the fittest
 can survive.

• 576 Although the Tukano seem outwardly reserved, lacking in affection and
 often proud, they are invariably very courteous. Their greetings are formal -
 just as we shake hands they always exchange a lengthy stream of words. It is

The Forest Addicts

as though the visitor to a *maloca* is explaining his reasons for arrival while the host answers him in short phrases of affirmation. They do not look at each other during the greeting, no matter whether they are in a *maloca*, on the river or in the forest. We were continually impressed by their simple yet perfect manners. Cassava and perhaps a newly-caught fish would be brought to us when we first arrived at a *maloca*, then, without our asking, we would be shown where we could sling our hammocks. 576 ● [123]

The men have an easier life than the women. Their short, clipped speech has, like their gait, a matter-of-fact sense of urgency about it, but is punctuated by high trills of laughter when they joke and make fun amongst themselves. They are born with a sense of humour, and it is the old who suffer at the hands of the young. In one *maloca* a little boy consistently refused to let his grandfather take his afternoon siesta. To everyone's great amusement he would tickle the old man with a piece of grass, pretending a fly was settling on his body. 562 522 888

It would be impossible to say whether the early push of the Jesuits up the River Amazon towards the end of the seventeenth century, and the more recent incursions of the *caucheros* and the Roman Catholic missionaries on the Vaupés and Caquetá, have had an influence on Tukano thought. Certainly their beliefs are very complex. Moreover, the Tukano live in an area as far from the Amazon as the Hebrides from London, while the first direct missionary contact with the Upper Piraparaná had been made by Padre Elorza only the month before we arrived. 797

Besides believing in some vague all-powerful good spirit or god, the Indian believes in many lesser spirits, both good and evil, all of which have a great influence on him and to a large extent rule his life. The good spirits can be recognized in the pleasant things of the forest. They are represented by fruit trees and plants – bananas, pineapples and other edible fruits, and coca too; the various trees used in making the *malocas*; the cool and clear forest streams. Whereas the poison in manioc, the twisted creepers and roots which trip weary hunters, and the jagged rocks in rapids which split canoes – these are evil spirits. 776

Apart from this animistic belief, the Indian believes in an immortal soul – at least in some cases, for he acknowledges the existence of spirits of the dead, usually his ancestors. The spirit of a living man wanders only when he is asleep. The shaman on the contrary can divest his body of the spirit at will and glide through the jungle in the guise of a puma. 775 774 756

Indian life is greatly influenced by this fourfold world of the spirit – the monotheistic spirit or god, the animistic spirits, the ancestor spirits and the detached living spirits, and it is the evil ones who hold the greatest sway over a man's life. 776 775

Usually the men are called after birds, and the women after plants and 000

191 manner in which an Indian normally translates from Spanish to Tukano is so regular that it can be stated almost as a rule: the Indian remains silent until the full statement has been made in Spanish, he waits then for a few seconds until apparently the way he would say it in Tukano comes to him, and then he restates it in a normal Tukano sentence that generally has a syntactic structure very different from that of the Spanish sentence. This suggests that most Indians may be "coordinate" in their knowledge of Spanish and Tukano rather than "merged" (Weinreich 1953). Or, the cultural pattern may favor coordinate rather than merged control. This procedure can be enervating, culturally, to the monolingual Spanish-speaker, who expects to be replied to almost without audible pause between the end of his statement and the beginning of his responder's statement in rapid-fire repartee.

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• 576 Anything said in Spanish is customarily repeated aloud in translation, even when all the Indians present already know Spanish. For the Indian, repeating a part of what a speaker says is a formal conversational device indicating understanding, assent (dissent if repeated with a negative suffix), and respect. In a formal gathering, as in the men's circle in the evening when the day's tasks are over, the amount of respect accorded to the older men who begin the session is indicated by how much the listeners repeat them. In the same setting, the remarks of a visitor speaking in another language are repeated in their entirety if someone present does not understand the language; as the conversation acquires more informal character and smaller conversation groups form, the repeating is dropped except for the respectful, assenting repeating of the last verbs of clauses and sentences; the visitor, indeed, may change to the language of the longhouse, if he knows it.

191 Repeating in translation something said in Spanish or Portuguese takes place in an interesting culture-contact situation. The encounter is rarely in a formal context for the Indian. It may be on a river bank, or on a trail, or on boats with the paddlers holding on to each others' boats and holding on to vines, or it may be on the street in a mission town. It almost never takes place in a formal gathering of Indians, as many situations calling for formal gatherings are discouraged by non-Indians. Nevertheless, many, or all, Indians of the settlement may be present.

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The repeating is first of all a respectful recognition of the Spanish-speaking non-Indians, but there also seems at times to be an additional quality of defensiveness connected with the practice. The repeating seems to serve as a stalling device so that the Indians can evaluate something of the intentions of the non-Indians, as indicated by their demands, their mood, and their degree of tolerance of Indian habits (for example, whether they permit beer, or admonish women—and men—for going without upper garments). Most non-Indians issue orders and interrogate loudly, according to the Latin American stereotype of the way to speak to Indians, rather than "converse" with them. The Indians, for various reasons, want to be sure that they have heard every question and order correctly. Consequently, repeating serves as a double-checking device, for corrections in translation are supplied unhesitatingly and immediately by other listeners following the translator. In sum, then, repeating is a formal conversational device indicating respect that also has an adaptive defensive function.

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Inasmuch as the Eastern Tukanoan languages share the same general syntax, the Indians' ability to recognize and cope with the different syntactic system of Spanish suggests that other Indian languages and language families in the Northwest Amazon may have different syntactic structures, too.

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Certain formulaic communication styles—regardless of Indian language family—are probably the same throughout the area, particularly greetings on entering a new longhouse in traveling. I have witnessed and participated in many such situations where the longhouse language was unknown either to me or to some of my Indian traveling companions, and always the content of the initial sequence of bilingual statements was clear to all (namely, the assertion that one has arrived; from which direction—upriver or downriver—one has come, and from what named spot; how many days one has been traveling; and who one's father and mother and brothers and sisters are, and how they are faring). There are other occasional formulaic conventions, especially those involving repeating, that can help a novice gain familiarity with a language. Many languages also seem to share interjections. (In these respects the central Northwest Amazon area may constitute what J. Neustupny has termed a *Sprechbunde* [speech

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191 he speaks, well, what ones he only understands but does not speak, etc.⁵

I observed no tendency for people to claim knowledge of a language not actually known. I also observed that the Indians' terms for rating fluency, when translated into English, are underestimates. Thus when an Indian says he speaks such-and-such a language "some," we would be more prone in English-speaking culture to say he speaks it "quite well." The unequally weighted rating scale used by informants in Tucano is perhaps best rendered by these English glosses and paraphrases: (1) "none"; (2) "hardly any" or "just a few words"; (3) "some, but not well" ("well" referring to pronunciation), or "half-way"; (4) "almost all" or "just a little lacks"; (5) "all." To an unqualified question, an informant usually gives his *speaking* fluency rating. He must be questioned separately for ratings on languages he understands but does not speak or "hardly speaks." All these observations make it appear that the Indians are indifferent or, perhaps, blasé about their multilingualism.

Their orientation to multilingualism is instrumental and practical, but not devious. The languages used in a given situation are not chosen with motives of concealment from others. Politeness leads visitors to use their hosts' language, if they know it. Reliance on one language as against another is not considered impolite, however, and only on rare occasions, when such a reliance is exaggerated insistently and provocatively, can it signal the expression of anything resembling a militant tribal rivalry. This may, but need not, occur during beer-drinking bouts, as at a formally arranged product-exchanging and friendship-renewing ceremony between two longhouses representing two tribes; but here it should be viewed as a means for expressing and releasing accumulated, and usually minor, tensions rather than as a product of the drunken brawl pictured by most non-Indians. The stereotypes of unsympathetic non-Indians may have prejudiced accounts of some of the unsuccessful ceremonies that have received notoriety. Overt rivalry in most of these ceremonies seldom needs to go beyond the all-night competitive dancing of the separate rival troupes; and by the second day, the older men's chanting may end up entirely in the host-longhouse's language, while the younger men form one cooperative, consoli-

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